

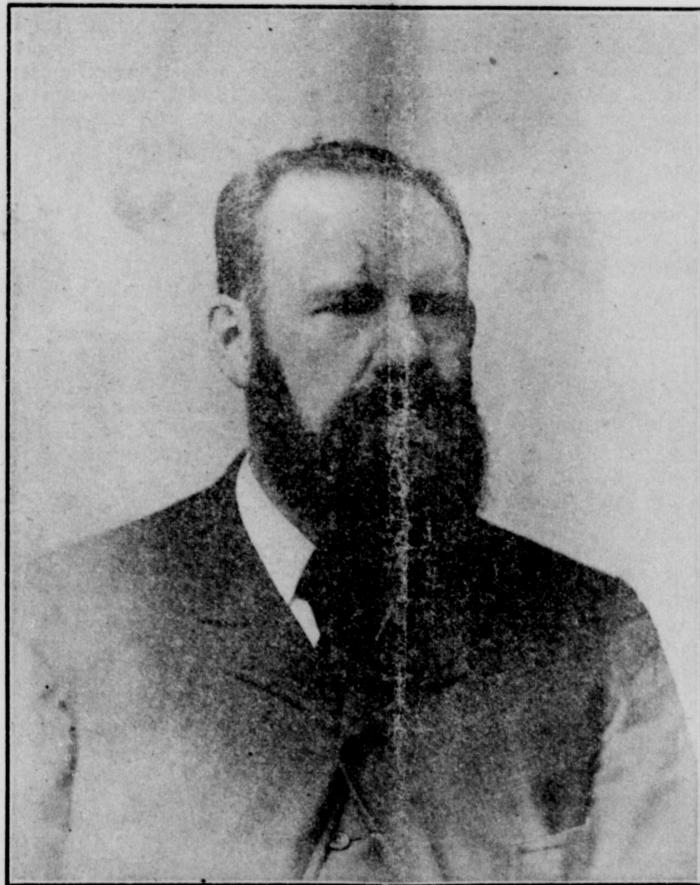
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DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT



DR. A. HAUSMAN.
Author of *New Work on Evolution*.

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You ask me for a sketch of my life,—do you realize what that means? Do you know that you are asking me to appear before the court of public opinion, and plead guilty? Guilty of the most unpardonable and heinous crime on the social statutes, although it is not found in the criminal code. Therefore it is not murder, burglary, forgery, or any such trifling offense which may be condoned on earth and forgiven in heaven. It is worse than any of these, and confessing it, I am crushed by the enormity of my guilt. I did not make a fortune! Now come on and throw stones at me; I have no mitigating circumstances to offer, but in extenuation of my sin, I will give a brief sketch of my fruitless life to serve as a warning for the young men so that they may avoid my mistakes in the future.

I came to life in some little place in Germany, and although I do not remember the event, the unpleasant fact of my existence does not permit of any doubt in this respect. Until I was a little over 14 years of age I went to the public school, in the upper class of which enough of Latin was taught to enable the pupil to enter the high school, preparatory for the university. I do not remember anything by which I distinguished myself from the rest of the boys. I was vaccinated with success, as the scars show; I was baptized, instructed in religion, solemnly received into the church by confirmation, but it did not take, and I have nothing to show for it. But I developed a wonderful perception of right and wrong. I never stole apples or anything else from private parties (perhaps the fact that we had a large orchard ourselves may have had some beneficent influence), but I considered the fish in the streams and the game in the fields, which belonged to the ruling Prince, common property, and the legitimate prey of the down-trodden subjects. Stealing fish and game in defense of the people's rights and in defiance of the government's laws and earning the well deserved reputation as the most skillful poacher in those parts, was my proudest achievement.

After leaving school I became apprentice in a drug store,—four years' work for board, and then an examination. Hating to serve in the army, I concluded to emigrate, and being offered a loan to study medicine, I accepted. Arriving at the University of Jena, I met with an obstacle; my examination as druggist was not deemed sufficient to admit me to the study of medicine. At that time (and to some extent it is the same today) the so-called classical education at the gymnasium, consisting in the study of dead languages and other worthless matter, was considered essential to the training of the mind,—a superstition entirely unfounded and a detriment to the dissemination of rational ideas. After one term of probation, my mental capacity was considered sufficient, and I was admitted to the medical faculty. Whatever misgivings I had myself about my ability to think logically without a "classical education", were speedily dispelled when I learned that the most stupid student at the college, the dunce and laughing-stock of all, was a student of philosophy. At Jena, I attended Prof. Haeckel's lectures on the theory of evolution, which had been established by Darwin only a few years before, and I became at once an ardent convert of the new gospel.

After obtaining my diploma, I started for the promised land with debts galore, but money scarcely enough to carry me to the edge of the big pond. By good luck, I found a chance to work my way across and borrow enough money in New York to reach Missouri, where I had friends.

Being a self-made man, I was entitled to become a millionaire, according to the customary tradition, but I soon found out that it would require even more than Methuselah's age to attain this coveted goal through the practice of medicine, and I felt discour-

aged. I tried my luck in a large city, and had the opportunity to accompany a patient to New York to have an operation performed. Returning after several months, I was induced to take part in a mining venture, and went to Leadville to work a claim. It ended with the usual results,—we were sadder and wiser men. But I hated to commence the practice again, and went into mining body and soul. It was hard work, but I persevered and succeeded to some extent, although a peculiar kind of ill-luck seemed to persecute me. I had given up the idea of ever practicing medicine again, and went to a School of Mines to finish my education as mining engineer. This ought to have given me chances to make a fortune, but instead it ruined me. I was engaged as essayer chemist for a mining camp in Mexico where a smelter was being built, and promised a better position; but when the plant was finished the scoundrel gave it to another man, and wanted me to act as doctor. I protested vigorously and was discharged.

This happened during the panic in 1893, and it was impossible for me to find work. In reply to a bitter complaint I made to the President of the Mexico company, I was informed that the former manager had left, and that I could get the position as surgeon, no other being vacant. I had no choice, and took it, remaining until the property changed hands in 1903, when I went to St. Louis. In 1904, during the Fair, a Congress of Freethinkers met in St. Louis, which I attended. An examination of the Liberal literature exhibited, convinced me that a work I had written some time ago would be useful in the battle for a good cause, and induced me to send the Ms. to Prof. Ernst Haeckel, and ask his opinion, which he gave in a letter when returning it.

Having no means to start a practice, I accepted an opportunity to go to Nevada and find mining property for investment, intending to practice somewhere out West, if that should fail. I did not find anything suitable in Nevada, but examined a placer in one of the northern counties of California which I found valuable and recommended for purchase. But my parties waited too long and the opportunity was lost, and also the interest I would have received. Then I turned towards the practice of medicine, and learned that an examination had to be passed, which I took in December, 1905, but failed.

It seemed somewhat strange that I should not be qualified to practice, after having occupied for eight years the position of surgeon in the mining camp, where more accidents happened than in many a good-sized town; but any one familiar with this so-called examination will understand it easily enough. The object is not at all to test the ability of the applicants, but only to keep physicians, and particularly specialists, out of the State, and for that purpose the questions are so chosen that there is no danger of any one answering them who has been away from college longer than a few years. Most of the questions refer to subjects that are of no value whatever for the practitioner, and in the last examination the most important subjects for the practitioner, surgery, medicine and *materia medica*, are not even mentioned. A few questions may give an idea about the character of the examinations: "How much alcohol contains whisky, brandy, sherry and kaumiss?" "How is liquid air obtained?" "Give a plan for a modern installation for ventilation," etc. It is one of the meanest grafts in California. Under the pretext of protecting the public against quacks, able physicians are robbed (\$25) and cheated by the thieves composing the Board of Medical Examiners. The earthquake demoralized the mining business, and a gang of professional highwaymen held me up by means of the statutes instead of the pistol. If a man is competent and willing to follow a useful profession and is prevented by the law, what can he do?

MAN'S ORIGIN AND DESTINY

Applied Evolution. Struggle for Existence. Survival of the Fittest. The Law of Inheritance. What the World Owes to Darwin.

PART 2 OF THE LATEST GREAT BOOK ON EVOLUTION.

(By Dr. A. Hausman.)

As the lowest type of organic life we find a substance which is neither animal nor plant, and must be considered as a remnant of a once perhaps extensive neutral domain, from which sprung both the animal and the vegetable kingdom. Their common point of departure is the simple cell, the egg or germ, and the development from this primitive body to a highly organized animal or plant takes place in an analogous manner. This is a significant fact in favor of the theory of evolution, because it shows that the laws and principles upon which it is based do not merely apply to man or certain groups of animals, but cover the broad domain of the entire organic kingdom. It is not the place here to enter into the details of the close relationship between animals and plants, the object of this book being less a general discussion of the Darwinian theory, than its application to man and his social life in particular. But as many people are not familiar enough with the original text-books of Darwin or Haeckel to recognize its general principles in this particular application, I deem it necessary to treat the fundamental facts with sufficient explicitness to enable the reader to obtain a comprehensive view over the vast field of investigation which we are about to enter. As the most primitive animal type, we know already the cell, a minute corpuscle of protoplasm, enclosed in a thin membrane. A glance through the microscope under which has been placed a drop of stagnant water, reveals thousands of these little creatures, moving around in a lively manner, being actively engaged in performing the principal functions of life, nutrition and propagation. Here we see the cell as an independent, free individual, but if we examine portions of a larger body in the same way, we perceive that it consists entirely of similar cells, varying more or less in size and shape. In fact, every higher animal may be defined as an agglomeration or colony of these original beings, which, however, have lost their identity as independent individuals and assumed instead certain special functions in the economy of the common body. All physiological organs, the brain included, are constructed of cells or their derivatives, and may be fittingly compared to separate departments of a political organization, the seat of intellect representing the central power.

Though subject to will and subordinate to the common interest, they have still preserved a certain autonomy in their functions and no man is completely master over himself.

Next in the series of progressive evolution, we find instead of one single cell, groups of cells, united into one individual, each one performing a certain function, according to an important biological law (of which later), division of labor. In animals of the higher order, complicated organs of wonderful anatomical structure have originated from these groups. Before proceeding however to closer examination of the successive stations, the classes, orders, etc., in the progressive development of the animal kingdom, I think it conducive to the better understanding of the immense material we have to deal with, to describe those natural factors discovered by Darwin as the fundamental principles of evolution.

ALL LIVING BEINGS PRODUCE MORE DESCENDANTS THAN POSSIBLY CAN EXIST ON EARTH.

This rule applies equally to all species, but the rate of propagation is much greater in the smaller than in the larger animals. Certain microscopical infusoria produce a progeny counting millions in a few hours. Many insects are scarcely less prolific, their posterity reaching thousands of millions in a few years. Some fishes have as many as a million eggs. Among the mammals the smaller species multiply faster than the large ones, but taking even the elephant and assuming that a couple lives fifty years, producing two pairs of young ones during this period, the number of descendants, provided they attain the age of the parents, would reach the enormous figure of one billion in a thousand years. We have proofs that elephants lived several thousand years ago, and it will be easily understood that the earth would be far too small for them had their increase continued unchecked till the present day. To further illustrate the result of perpetual propagation: One cubic inch of sand contains about one million grains, one cubic foot 1728 millions, and the whole earth would not hold more than sixty-three quintillions.

Man, in all his pretended divinity, does not make an exception from this maxim, and calculation will easily prove that his numbers would soon be like the sand on the sea and cover the entire earth, if allowed to increase in geometrical progression.

In the relation between numbers and space, we have an incontrovertible mathematical basis for the theory of evolution, which it is impossible to deny or refute. The word of the poet, "Room for all has the earth," is, alas, not

true. No friendly deity has provided ample room and abundant food for her creatures to live together in peace and harmony, but cruel, austere elements have shaped their destiny for eternal strife and war. They encroach upon and crowd each other, and wage a war of unrelenting extermination, the one preying upon and devouring the other. Still this natural state of universal hostility and discord is euphoniously called "harmony" by the orthodox believers in creation. If the early bird devours the earlier worm, the harmony in this arrangement appears to be rather one sided.

From these undisputable premises, the excess of numbers over the possibilities of existence, it follows as a logical deduction and with absolute certainty that the greater percentage of all the individuals born cannot reach maturity, but is bound to be destroyed at an early age.

This "Struggle for existence" must, however, not be interpreted as implying merely the direct destruction of one individual or species by another, but must be conceived in a much broader sense. It comprises the sum total of all the influences to which animals are subject, atmospheric, climatical, geological, besides of direct competition. Very complicated and intricate results arise from these causes and species interfere with each other which have no direct relation and are not dependent upon the same food for existence. Darwin relates as an instance of this kind, that the red clover in England is fructified by the bumble-bees, who carry the pollen from one flower to the other. Their enemies are the field-mice, which in turn are hunted by cats and birds of prey. It is unnecessary to dwell any longer on this subject; everybody knows how one kind feeds upon the other, how man himself sometimes suffers from the ravages of small insects and worms.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST. Admitting the impossibility that all the individuals born can live, the results must be the "survival of the fittest." In order to obtain a correct idea of the meaning of this expression, we must treat it together with the principle of *variation and adaptation* in the struggle of existence.

An individual does not represent an immutable, rigid type, but possesses a certain flexibility, the capacity of undergoing slight modifications and a tendency to adapt itself to its surroundings. Man, for instance, will become accustomed to changes in climate, mode of living, food, etc.; the hair of animals will grow thicker when transferred from a warm to a cold climate; plants will have smooth or hirsute stems or leaves, according to a dry or wet place. Every organism has the tendency to preserve his existence and adapt himself to altered conditions; that means, he will develop certain peculiarities, useful under the circumstances. Such acquired habits of physical qualities, whether controlled by will or not, may be useful, indifferent or detrimental to the owner, who, accordingly, will thrive and multiply, remain indifferent or perish. The individuals possessing the least power of resistance are continuously weeded out to make room for those better fitted to survive.

We must be careful, however, not to misinterpret the term "fittest" as physically the strongest, or to attach any definite quality to it, because it is a general expression for any kind of advantage one individual possesses over the other, and it does not even necessarily imply any personal merits, for often the defects of many constitute the sole superiority of one. The smallness and insignificance of an animal may be its strength. If in some parts of Africa oxen cannot live on account of a small fly, it is certainly not the strongest in this case who is fittest to survive. In the jealousy of the large powers in Europe, consists the safety of the small Swiss republic. I have noticed that some persons take exception to the principle of the survival of the fittest, because they conceive the term in its common usage, indicating ability for a certain task or office. But there is no moral significance attached to it in nature, we only know of cause and effect.

If useful qualities, acquired during life time, remained confined to one individual, they would become extinct with its death and play no part in the formation of a new species. But they are preserved and transmitted from generation to generation through—

THE LAW OF INHERITANCE. That physical as well as mental faculties may be transmitted from the parents to the offspring, is such a well known and universally admitted fact that it would be useless to waste any words about it. Resemblance of the child to the parents is such a common occurrence that much stress is laid upon it in case of doubtful identity. Characteristics of either parent may predominate, or they may be blended together, as Goethe says:

Vom Vater erb't ich die Statur,
Des Lebens erustes fuhren,
Vom Mutterchen die froh Natur,
Die Lust zum fabuliren.

Translations

From father I inherited the stature,
Life's conduct grave and bold,
From mother cheerful nature,
And love for fairy stories told.

Since time immemorial man has recognized the law of inheritance and has taken advantage of it to propagate and develop certain qualities in animals for his benefit. In our domestic animals we behold the results of this artificial selection, which is still going on, producing endless new varieties. Observation of the effects of breeding gave Darwin the impetus to those investigations which culminated in his grand theory. Noticing the conspicuous changes in appearance and anatomical structure under the influence of domestication, he arrived at the important conclusion that a species does not represent a fixed, immovable type. The example of a well-known animal may illustrate what this means. The dog belongs to the great natural division of vertebrates; to the class of mammals; the order of carnivora; the family canina; the genus canis, (wolf, fox,

dog) and the species *canis familiaris*. In this classification wolf, fox and dog are named as distinct species of the genus *canis*, while the different breeds of dogs are merely considered varieties of the species *canis familiaris*, even if less similarity exists between them as between the former. Comparing a badger dog or terrier with a greyhound or Newfoundland, it will be readily perceived that they differ more among each other than the wolf, fox and shepherd dog, and if encountered in a wild state they would, no doubt, have been determined as distinct species. Domestic pigeons also present an interesting example of the results of breeding; they deviate so far in anatomical structure and plumage from their wild ancestor that nobody would take them for birds of the same kind if ignorant of their common descent.

When peculiar characters are inherited they appear in the offspring at a time corresponding to the age at which they were acquired by the parent. The growth of horns at a certain age, the appearance of a beard and the mutation of the larynx at the period of puberty are well-known instances of this kind. Such characters, which are often of no apparent benefit, can be traced back usually to the action of another powerful agency in the process of evolution, the "instinct of propagation," called love in man. Darwin has described it in particular as "natural selection," and in "the descent of man" has shown that the striking differences between male and female animals in the higher orders consist in acquired, transmitted and developed characters, by which the favored individuals gain an advantage over their rivals in the competition for the possession or favor of the females. They are of a great variety and consist in weapons, useful in the combat with rivals, as horns and teeth, or in organs serving to find, attract and charm the females. To this kind belong the musical instruments of some insects, the trained choir of the frogs, the beautiful colors of the butterflies, the song and the brilliant plumage of the birds, etc. It sometimes happens that peculiarities appear which originally belonged to an ancient ancestor, but were lost long ago. This relapse into a prior type is called "atavismus," and affords a plausible explanation for the occurrence of certain monstrosities, for instance, abnormal growth of hair on face and body.

Having obtained a general idea of the principal agencies through which nature accomplishes the progressive transformation of animals, it remains to say a few words in explanation of one important factor in this process, propagation, which forms the basis of the law of inheritance. The essential character of propagation consists in the separation of a portion of the maternal body from which a new individual develops. We can easily observe this process in microscopical organisms, and I could not describe it better than by quoting a passage from an excellent article on "bacteria" in the April number of Harper's Magazine, 1891:

"When we put them under favorable conditions for growth, and give them food enough, they may be seen to

divide across the middle, each portion soon becoming larger and again dividing, so that it has been calculated that a single germ, if kept under favorable conditions, might, at the end of two days, have added to the number of the world's living beings 281,500,000,000 new individual bacteria. In fact, if this sort of thing went on for a few weeks unhindered, there would be very little room left on the earth's surface for any other form of life, and pretty much all the carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen which is available for life purposes in the world would be used up. There would be a corner in life stuff, and even the master, man, would be forced to the wall." It is not difficult to see how in this mode of propagation the single division of an individual, the properties of the mother organism are directly transmitted upon the new being. In the higher orders, however, the act of transmission is not so obvious and easy to understand, but it would be transgressing our object to enter into the details of this interesting and difficult section of zoology. May it suffice to state that between the two extremes the simple cell in the lowest and the separate sexes in the highest orders (the latter requiring the coalescence of two parts of germs for the generation of a new individual) there exists an intermediate state, "hermaphroditism," in which the sexual organs are separate, but still contained in the same individual.

Summing up the factors, we have recognized as the natural causes of the origin of species, we arrive at the following deductions: All animals consist of cells, the lowest of one, the highest of many. More beings are produced than can exist, hence a large percentage must perish. Those best adapted will survive, their useful properties will be transferred upon the progeny, modified and augmented and transferred again from generation to generation. A single cell is the prototype of life and all the other attributes which constitute a higher organism, represent additional characters, acquired in the course of time from the beginning of life to the present date. This theory is in conformity with the fact that all animals, the flea as well as the elephant, emanate from a single cell, the common progenitor of all.

One of the most interesting zoological phenomena, invaluable as an argument in favor of the theory of descent, deserves special mention, the "change of generation." This means that some animals do not emerge from the egg as perfect individuals, but assume first the shape of an inferior ancestor and live some time in this disguise before they attain their true form through further metamorphosis. This significant phase may be observed in many of the maritime animals, but the best-known examples are those of the butterfly and the frog. The former appears successively as a cell (the egg), a caterpillar (worm), a chrysalis and the perfect insect. The latter passes through the intermediate stage of the tadpole.

(To be Continued.)

Who Are Infidels?

Review of Facts and Figures as Concerns Infidelity. Mere Assertions but a Waste of Breath.

(By Julia C. Coon.)

The statistics given in the Blade by E. Lewis fill a long-felt want, and it is to be hoped that they will be followed by others.

I have for some time desired reliable statistics in regard to the religions of criminals. Freethinkers have in these figures one of the very strongest arguments against superstition, and I for one purpose to make use of them. They should be put in leaflet form for wide distribution.

I have seen the statement made that 80 per cent of our criminal class is the product of parochial schools. Has any one the figures to back this up? A mere assertion, without the figures, is waste of breath.

Had I been compiling the statistics given in the Blade, I would not have tried to be more than fair to the Christians, and this, it seems to me, Mr. Lewis often is. This is partly because such words as Freethinker, Christian, skeptic, unbeliever and infidel, convey such different meanings to different people, and the Liberal movement will make better progress when we have a generally accepted meaning.

Let us take the word "Infidel" first, for this is the one most misused. The word is an epithet applied by all creed-mongers to all who do not accept their own faith. According to this use, every one in the world is an infidel. "Innud dog" is a most common term for Christians to apply to Jews, while the Koran of Mohammed explicitly states that all Christians are infidels. But the word itself signifies unfaitful, and in the most correct sense it should mean one who is unfaitful to his own convictions. One who dare not live up to Shakespeare's grand line—

"This above all—to thine own self be true,
And it must follow as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

The word Christian comes from Chris, a supposed miraculous savior. Anyone who believes in degeneration and the need of miraculous salvation, and that the Nazarene was the son of a non-earthly being, and therefore the Christ, or savior, is a Christian. This will include a large class of people who are not affiliated with any church. It includes a class mostly widely diversified in character, from thoroughly honest, well-meaning people who eschew the church on account of its hypocrisy, to degenerates who expect to cheat their way through the world, and at the last moment throw all their sins on Jesus, the "savior",

and receive their reward in heaven. It is to this class of Christians that the criminals listed in the statistics as "no religion", "no church," "non-Christian," or "not given," belong. They are as truly Christian as are those listed Methodist or Presbyterian, and Mr. Lewis is more than generous to list them as Liber Is.

On the other hand, many church people do not believe the creeds of Christianity, and are in the church solely for policy. These are the world's real infidels, and they include the very worst class of people with whom society has to deal. To this class belong nearly all the ministers.

A skeptic, of course merely signifies one who is skeptical, or doubtful of part or the whole of the Christian creed. By no means should skeptics be counted as Freethinkers. They are on the line between, and belong to neither Freethinkers or Christians. The word unbeliever has about the same meaning as skeptic. Freethinkers and Materialists are the best believers in the world today, for they believe in mankind, in truth and in progress.

A word of explanation is due to my use of capitals for the words Freethinker, Materialist, Jew and Methodist, but not for christian, infidel, etc. I have seen no better rule than to use capitals whenever there is an organization under the name. There is no organization including all christians, the followers of this creed being now divided into 700 different sects. The word should not be capitalized unless referring to a member of the Christian, otherwise Campbellite church. The same is true of the word protestant, while the word Catholic should begin with a capital.

I am glad to see the Freethought press begin to concur in using the word god as a common noun, as it is, while, of course, such names as Jehovah, Allah, Zeus, etc., are proper nouns.

AN INQUISITIVE CHILD.

"Mamma, was the mother of Jesus named Mary Christ, or Mary God?"

"Sally, what are you talking about?"

"Why, you say Jesus Christ; and if his mother was never known as Mrs. Christ, how could that be his name?"

"Sally, you are too young to be talking about such things."

"But, mamma, if she was Mrs. Christ, how did God become his father?"

"Sally May, you must go to bed."

"If she was God's wife, and her name was Mary God, then his name should be Jesus God."

"Sally, Sally, get your nighty and go to bed this minute."

"Mrs. Christ, or Mrs. God, or Mrs. Mary Somebody, had a son called Jesus Christ, and the Catholics call her the 'Mother of God.' I don't understand it."

"Go to bed, Sally."

"Good-night, Mamma."

THOMAS PAINE.

All Liberal Men and Women are Exhorted to Aid in Making the Centennial a Success.

(By George Dahlhamer.)

How the name of Thomas Paine thrills the heart and soul of man as he reads the wonderful truths he uttered when the mass of people were in ignorance; how wonderfully he predicts with almost superhuman foresight the things that are coming true.

For instance, he said if America would free herself from England, she would become one of the greatest nations on the globe.

I often wish our Christian brethren could give biblical prophecies to be fulfilled as accurately as that. His noble, generous heart filled with love for down-trodden humanity. With the same zeal and courage he wrote his "Age of Reason" to free the mind of his fellow man from the then existing superstitions. The sacrifices he made, the toil and hardships he endured to help man to his right place in life, and then to be villified, his character blackened and his name dragged to the very depth of pollution by Christians, should be enough to make any man who has brains to read and think, abhor and detest a system that will degrade a man by whose efforts they enjoy the privileges they do.

Freethinkers and Liberal people everywhere should give the matter more thought and consideration, and all put a shoulder to the wheel to give the cause and him the honor and justice due them.

Let us one and all give him honor and praise for his noble deeds.

June 9, 1909, will be one hundred years since his death, and the Paine Historical Society will hold an anniversary in commemoration of the event, at New Rochelle, New York, and all who can should contribute to the cause to make it a rousing demonstration worthy of his name and deeds.

All who can contribute, will remit funds to Dr. E. B. Foote, 120 Lexington Avenue, New York.

Dear Liberals, do not neglect this important matter. Think of the glorious liberty we enjoy tendered us by Thomas Paine.

Important Life Problems

**As Life is but a Process, there Must Be
More or Less Suffering, No Matter
What our Knowledge May Be.**

(By W. S. Dean.)

"What do you know? Did you ever sit in silence and try to look at your own knowledge? Take any subject you like and think how much there must be about it that you are ignorant of. And then think of all the subjects, any one of which could not be absolutely known even if you have given a whole life to its study! None of us are wise, but only struggling toward wisdom or the right conception of things. As a republican or democrat, how much study have you put upon the subject of economics? The socialist, single-taxer, anarchist, prohibitionist, populist and others of that element have each done more or less thinking or reading on the subject—but have you? Are you not playing the game of government without any preparation at all? Have you a single book in your home on the subject? Or have you read a single work, and did you get any understanding from it when you did read it? There is nothing the matter with human association except ignorance—a wrong perception. If we knew the real facts, we would not be suffering from any ills? Socialism is the study of economics, a course in the science of government, that you may play the game with intelligence. Again, I ask, what do you know?"

To the writer of the above we will say, to get the right conception of things, we must go to the head of all great problems that concern the people, and find out what is the greatest evil those problems has to contend with. We know that the older we grow, that we realize more and more not only our ignorance on many things, but we have learned some few things that if they had been learned earlier in life, we could have applied the key they had given us, in not only solving problems for ourselves in a true light, but might have been a starter for many men to untangle the problems they had to contend with. Not for the money interest and profit we might gain, or any calling that would appeal to slavish minds for the sake of premiums offered, but to know that the general experience of past and present times gives us the little knowledge we do have. But as to the saying, if we knew the real facts we would not be suffering from any ills, is putting it rather strong. For we all ought to know that life comes and goes, and through that process there will be more or

less suffering even if we did know the facts of all ills.

Socialism may be the study of economics, but economics, or any other individualist or government function that is put forward by those who will not, or dare not, point out the greatest evil—Superstition; whose advocates stand ready at all times to mix in and seize any advantage that may present itself, and turn that advantage to their own selfish interest, at the expense of all true, honest progress for the people; there will be little use in playing the game in the expectation of doing much good to the producing classes. A mere change of economic conditions ought to show plainly to those whose minds are open to reason that any group of people whose aim is more to urge the voters to support their party candidates than to point out the spawn from which human slavery is hatched, will not be able to accomplish much good with what they do know.

MUNCIE FREETHINKERS ORGANIZED.

**Report of the Initial Meeting and Review
of Bright Prospects for Future
Success.**

(By Dr. T. J. Bowles.)

Not long ago I wrote to you that we were trying to arrange for a course of Rationalistic Sunday lectures in this city, and I am glad to inform you that the course was inaugurated last Sunday with an attendance of one hundred and fifty ladies and gentlemen.

The main difficulty to overcome in a movement of this kind, where Freethinkers are few in number, is financial; the necessary outlay for hall rent and other incidental expenses, added to the expense of securing good speakers, make a sum beyond the ability of a few to sustain; to overcome this difficulty, before attempting to organize the movement, we laid the matter before our distinguished Freethought friends, and many of them have agreed to appear upon our platform and lecture for us without any charge, except the liquidation of their expenses in coming to and returning from our city. An arrangement of this kind completely solves the difficulty of Free-thought propaganda work, and I hope you will give it publicity through the columns of the Blade, and urge our lecturers to aid the Free Thinkers in every town and city throughout the country to organize a course of Sunday lectures.

The eminent men in the Rationalistic movement have a common interest with

the rank and file, and a sacrifice of a small portion of their time in aiding the Freethinkers of the Nation to humanize the worshippers of malignant gods and malicious devils, would be a contribution that every magnanimous man ought to gladly and cheerfully make.

I need not ask you to assist us with your presence once or twice during the year, for I know what your answer would be, and I shall take the liberty to make a date for you some Sunday in March or April, as may best suit your convenience.

Hoping to learn through the Freethought press that many societies like ours will be organized during the current year, and with many kind wishes for you, I am yours always.

NOTICE!

To My Friends:—A few more copies of Paine's "Age of Reason", paper covers, sent postpaid, for 15 cents in stamps. This book should be circulated broadcast by the thousands. It being iconoclastic in its language, we will brush away the cobwebs of superstition from the credulous. The proceeds from this sale will be given the Blue Grass Blade for the benefit of indigent Freethinkers. Address

A. B. BENNETT, Norwalk, Conn.

From a Paine Admirer.

MARYLAND.—I enclose an article on Thos. Paine that I would like to see published in the Blade, and which I believe will help arouse interest in his behalf. If it is necessary, you make what changes you think best, as I am a crude writer, but I am a great admirer of Paine. Wish I had the financial means,—I would certainly aid the cause more. I was instructed in the United Brethren faith; was at the "mourners' bench" twice,—once when I was 13 years old and again when I was 17, but could not receive the light they claimed came over others, and was scared almost out of my senses for fear of going to hell. I was worried and believed I was in a lost condition until about 20 years ago, when I got a copy of Paine's "Age of Reason". The preachers said Paine did not believe in a god, heaven or hell, but to my astonishment and surprise I read on the first page, "I believe in one God and no more," I could scarcely believe my own eyes. I read and re-read that passage to fully convince myself it was there, as I had heard so much about Paine being such a low, degraded wretch, forsaken by god and man. Is it any wonder I was dumfounded? Is it any wonder I am enthusiastic after such enlightenment? Wish I could tell you more but must close, wishing you success.—GEO. DAHLHAMER.

BLUE GRASS BLADE

BLUE GRASS BLADE.

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GODLINESS AND IMMORALITY.

That Christian missionary work leads to a Hindu harem is revealed by the startling confession of Mabel Collins, of Cleveland, Ohio, who has just returned from a missionary trip to India, with the gift of tongues. There were four girls in the party, according to the report of the confession. Two of them abandoned their cause upon reaching Benares, and entered a harem, where it is presumed they now are. Another girl left the camp to run off with some hill men, and the penitent is the only one left to return and tell the tale.

In this connection it will not be out of place to make reference to a published statement made by George E. Burlingame, a San Francisco clergyman, who calls down a terrible retribution upon the city at the Golden Gate because California had no Sunday law upon her statute books. He declares that San Francisco has maintained a unique position among American cities, as being entitled to the "pre-eminence in godlessness and immorality." While his attempt at correlation of "godlessness" and "immorality" may be accepted by some of the faithful in Jesus, the thinking man, the intelligent man, will be able to realize the fact that much of the present day immorality emanates from the godly and not from the ungodly. Our penitentiary reports will corroborate that fact. To denounce brothels may be eminently proper, but even Rev. Burlin-

game ought to be cognizant of the historical fact that harlotry is essentially a Christian product, a vice sanctioned by ecclesiastical authority. He also ought to know that bible heroines are reported as actually playing the harlot, and in the first paragraph of this very article it is related how three Christian young women, leaving home and friends, family and country, to carry "glad tidings" to the poor, benighted heathen, having, or claiming to have, a special gift of tongues to enable them to prosecute their work, fell by the wayside and sold their bodies into sexual slavery. Surely, these girls were "godly" enough, and if the facts in connection with the California brothels could be given, they would doubtless prove that their inmates were all of the godly caliber.

Godliness is not essential to morality. The very immorality of which this blatherskite complains was, doubtless, a product of god believers, for he admits that "there were not wanting an element of godly people." From the time of Constantine, through the long ecclesiastical period, to the Lutheran reformation, godliness and immorality were synonymous. With the dawn of the Protestant church in England, the most essentially pious were the most actually licentious, while the original Defender of the Protestant faith, is notorious in history for his sexual crimes. Bigamy, incest, murder, uxoreide and adultery, are but a few of the crimes chronicled against the name of both Henry VIII, and his bishop, Cranmer. In all the world there was but one branch more brutal and immoral than the Catholic hierarchy against which it rebelled, and that was the Church of England. There was but one church more constitutionally licentious than this, namely, the Catholic.

No stream can rise higher than its source. This is a well repeated truth. Bad trees will bring forth bad fruit. This is another mighty truth. Then what can we expect in America from such institutions? Lacking in that essential moral culture, a culture demanded by the age, and concerned exclusively for the welfare of their fancied souls, and taught the supposed virtue of a death-bed repentance, it is not strange that the godites should abandon themselves to immortalities, but it is not in accord with truth to couple immorality with unbelief.

The Christian religion was a great misfortune inflicted upon an ignorant people, in an ignorant and early age. Its teachings furnished a license to crime. They still furnish the same license. The savage and brutal reign of the Puritans, in New England, was the direct outcome of those long continued cruelties and immoralities of the Christian church, which had made men positively mad.

Not until the day of literature dawned did the immoralities of the church begin to wane. Wane, they have, but the remnants are still with us. The modern daily newspapers furnish a never-ending chain of crimes committed by preachers and professors of the Christian faith. It is even now reported from Ironton, Ohio, that a certain preacher, who, by the way, delivered a baccalaureate sermon for a college of young ladies in Lexington but a short time ago, is now under arrest and in jail awaiting trial be-

fore the courts of that state upon a charge of paternity preferred against him by a domestic in his employ. Talk about godlessness and immorality! Forsooth! The records of the great world's history will furnish abundant proof that the most immoral have ever been the most consistent worshippers at the shrine of the Christian faith.

Teach mankind that the unit of society must face the consequences of his own immoral acts; that it is impossible for him to shift the responsibility; that the consequences of wrong-doing are both natural and inevitable; that no man can grant an indulgence or furnish absolution to another, and the tendency will be towards morality and truth, instead of immorality and fiction.

Accepting the confession of the young lady previously referred to as being true, the facts she relates will prove that a belief in god is not a sufficient incentive to morality and right conduct. This belief in god utterly failed to keep in check the morbidity of those young girls left in India, and if Rev. Burlingame will but take the trouble to investigate, seriously and honestly, he will find that much of what he complains in San Francisco, emanates from a like class of people.

WHEN THE SECTS UNITE.

To unify the opposing and antagonistic Christian sects, is now the dream of those professional sanctified charlatans who see in the decline of faith a loss of prestige and personal affluence.

There is little prospect, however, at this time of their dreams being aught else, assuming more tangible shape. The bloody chasm which Luther and his co-laborers opened up, will not be bridged during the century in which we live, and if it ever does come it will be as furnishing a means of common defense, a combined resistance to the onward march of intellectual freedom. The Protestant sects will not unite with the Catholic, and as Protestantism is cut up into myriads of warring sects, it would be impossible to formulate a creed, or to devise a doctrine, that all would accept and consent to unite upon.

The tendency of the time is not toward unifying the church sects, but towards a greater and a more sharply defined division, as the constant springing up of new sects under new leaders, self-assumed, will bear witness. Instead of dogmatic controversy dying away, it is becoming more general, while heterodoxy is being hunted with keener zest, and the disputes between sects is as virulent and bitter as the polemics of political partizanship. Meanwhile, the majority of mankind in all highly civilized countries remain away from and outside of the church, take not the slightest thought for religious teaching and doctrine, and these seek the truth in Science rather than in revelation.

Just as dogmatism has been the prolific and fruitful mother of doubt, so the conduct and persistent meddling of the clergy in matters that do not concern them or their work, will drive hundreds more from the orthodox fold,

for the reaction will surely come, and then, after us, the deluge. If any preacher is inclined to doubt the truth of what is said herein, let him cease his preaching for a season, get out and mingle with the multitudes, assume the role of an unbeliever, and he will soon learn the truth from the lips of men. While the honest doubter may yield passive and tacit assent to the prevalent orthodoxy, it is reasonably certain that the earnest believer will hardly consent to play the role of St. Peter, just before the cock crew, and without compulsion. Instead of conquering the world, the church is rapidly losing what it had, for one by one the world's wisest and best are slipping away from them and enlisting in the service of humanity. Policy is made the distinguishing character of the church in this day and age, and any institution depending upon such a source of supply, must perish and fall of its own weight.

Intelligent men and women do not care to sit and listen to prosy sermons on foreordination and the terrors of Tartarus, because their very reason, enlightened by experience, rejects such cruel creeds; nor do they take interest in the discussion whether sprinkling or ducking be the correct form of baptism, and necessary to salvation, because they cannot, for the very life of them, see that it makes the slightest difference whether they be baptized at all. They do not want to be worried with jejune speculations about the trinity, because one god would be quite sufficient if men could only find him. They care nothing for the alleged miracles and regard with absolute indifference whether they be true or not. On the other hand the world grows more and more heart hungry for knowledge, but all the church can offer is a stone.

Like many another structure of similar character, the Christian church can maintain but a mere semblance of its former vigor and strength. Its brilliancy was born of a dominating factor in social life, and is simply a mere annex. It can afford to pay for ostentation and fashionable diversion, for many of its devotees are wealthy and are willing to pay for the pastime. But this must bring it nearer and more rapidly to the end. There will be only one unification of the Christian church and that will be found in total annihilation.

Several copies of the 1908 Bound Volume of the Blade have been sent to subscribers. Just wait until you hear from them as to its merits. We could not fill all orders received, for lack of material, but not more than half a dozen will be missed. Better provisions will be made for this year's volume.

As the Editor will be in Ohio by the time this issue is in the hands of our readers, and will be away from the office for about twelve days, some necessary correspondence and other matters will have to be delayed. We merely ask a little patience.

DOES IT PAY?

One striking and important sign of the times, as indicating the position of the Christian church, comes from New York City, where it is reported the church property of St. John's Chapel, on Varick Street, owned by the Trinity corporation, is to be abandoned, the structure sold, for the sole and simple reason that it does not pay, is no longer profitable, to be continued as a place of religious worship.

Two thoughts here suggest themselves. One is that after all, the church as an institution, is actually run for profit with the alleged saving of souls as a mere secondary consideration, and the other is that in a populous and well settled district, it is impossible for the orthodox church to sufficiently attract the people and obtain revenue from them to carry on the evangelical part of the church's work.

Does it pay? That is now the most important consideration with the gospel sharks. Does it pay? This question is foremost with one of the wealthiest church corporations in the civilized world. Does it pay? Is the issue upon which churchmen are willing to abandon soul-saving. Does it pay? That is all. This, too, irrespective of the fact that the man-god they are presumed to worship and adore, is reported as instructing those who believed in him, to go forth and preach to all the world, and to take neither purse or script with them. Does it pay? Is there money in it? How much is the graft? Can it show a dividend? Will there be anything to distribute after expenses are paid? And then, we are told, salvation is free.

Obviously, the argument is that when a church ceases to furnish revenue, it is to be abandoned and sold. No thought here for a suffering humanity; none for the poor and oppressed. No pay, no preach. No money, no salvation. No revenue, no church. This is the motto of the modern orthodox Mokanna, and there be men and women who express wonder and astonishment that others should oppose and resist its further influence.

Can it really be true, that in the year 1909, in a thickly settled community, wealth and poverty mingled around and about it, any church building in America would prove unprofitable? May we not regard such an incident as indicative of the aversion of the people for orthodox presumptions? Will it not prove the impotency of the church itself? Does it not prove, conclusively, that the people are drifting away from the church and have but little use for it? What the people want, wish for, they will support. As they will not give their support to this church it is *prima facie* evidence that the people do not want it.

There is much in this to encourage American Freethinkers to even greater energy in the prosecution of the work before them. Once all churches can be brought into a similar condition, the parsons will become more humble in their attitude towards the public, and cease to pose as great moralists and leaders in public affairs. The labors of Freethought advocates have gone far toward producing such a result and it is a hopeful sign of future success,

provided we stick manfully to our task of destroying orthodox error.

VOX POPULI, VOX DEI.

One Lexington parson has accidentally stumbled across a startling sociological truth, but, unfortunately for him, he did not seem to know it or to appreciate its value.

Rev. I. J. Spencer is pastor of the Central Christian church, and is regarded as a fair-minded man, capable, etc., but like all parsons he cannot read in the will of the people his own pending doom. Realizing that by compulsory observance of superstition's decrees the parson's power is enhanced, the church's coffers filled and the organization granted a few more years lease upon life itself, Mr. Spencer would have the Legislature enact more stringent Sunday laws and would require all officers under the executive branch of the government, with police power, to rigidly enforce existing Sunday laws, to the greater glory and power of the church and the parson.

Recently, Mr. Spencer delivered a sermon on this subject, which was reported at length in the local papers. Among other things, he made complaint that even grocery stores should be opened on Sunday for the sale and delivery of life's necessities, but very frankly, though ineffectually, admitted that grocery stores were only open on Sunday for their usual and customary trade, because "THE PEOPLE DEMANDED THEY SHOULD BE."

And pray, Mr. Spencer, if the people continue to demand that they open will they not keep open and transact business in spite of the laws or subsequent legislation? Is it not a judicial fact that no law can be enforced unless there is a healthy public sentiment behind it? Have not our Circuit Judges from the benches, so spoken? Do not legislative bodies cater to the popular will, and is it not right that they should do so? The people constitute the supreme power, the sovereign authority of the State. Has not the church itself declared "Vox populi, vox dei"? Then if the people demand the opening of stores on Sunday, is not the church treading upon dangerous ground in opposing them?

By this seemingly concerted plan of campaign upon the Sunday question, the preachers are simply calling attention to themselves and this attention may prove to be in a direction the preachers little desire or little suspect. The moment it dawns upon the mind of the people that the church is becoming intolerantly oppressive, a destroyer of human liberty, they will turn in rebellion against the entire Christian system and the day of its impending doom will be considerably hastened thereby. A reaction is bound to come.

Have you done anything to help the Paine Centennial? If not, write to Dr. E. B. Foote, 120 Lexington Avenue, New York City.

OUR EDITOR'S LECTURE TOUR.

By the time this issue of the Blade is in the hands of its subscribers the Editor will once more be in the field in behalf of rationalism and humanity. The campaign is to be made altogether in Ohio. Two debates are now practically arranged for, as we have agreed to meet Rev. McVey, a Campbellite preacher, at McConnellsville. The trip will occupy about two weeks, and at the various points stopped at we would be pleased to meet our friends, especially Blade readers. The list of dates and places for these lectures and debates will be as follows:

- January 29,—Dennison, Ohio.
 - January 30,—Uhrichsville, Ohio.
 - January 31,—Dennison, Ohio.
 - February 2,—Chardon, Ohio.
 - February 4-5,—Canal Dover, Ohio, two days debate with Rev. Leander S. Keyser.
 - February 6-7,—Marietta, Ohio.
 - February 9,—McConnellsville, Ohio, debate with Rev. McVey.
 - February 11,—Circleville, Ohio.
-

HEATHEN POLITENESS AND CULTURE.

Christian ethics may be one thing, but Christian practice is most assuredly another and different thing.

The people of Japan are by no means Christian. Religious, in a sense, they may be, but it is a religious system all their own. Too frequently they are referred to as being "heathens" and the term is generally used to convey the impression of ignorance and idolatry.

History intimates that the ancient Greeks were the quintessence of politeness, and from current reports the Japanese are not very far behind them. Bear in mind, however, that the Japanese are non-Christian. Our readers will be aware of the fact that the American fleet has recently visited Japan. The reports state that the Americans were given a royal welcome. While in Japanese waters, the American fleet anchored at Kanogawa, a town on the Bay of Tokyo. In anticipation of their arrival, and presumably on the ground that the Japanese, being human, were like all other human beings and possessed a degree of curiosity, the Governor of the town named, according to a report published in the *Tour du Monde*, of Paris, issued a proclamation to the people as to the manner in which the "foreigners" should be treated upon their arrival. Let the Christian read and compare the following with what has happened to Japanese visiting Christian countries:

"Loungers shall not crowd around foreigners. Merchants must not charge them excessive prices. People must refrain from throwing stones at the dogs which accompany strangers, who are to be treated with courtesy and cordiality. They must be offered a seat when they enter government offices and not be required to take off their hats.

If the Persians are the French of the Nearer East, being

not only sentimental but adepts at persiflage and repartee, the Japanese are the Greeks of the Far East. Their poetry is exquisite, their power of sarcasm and satire undoubted. They have the faults of their qualities and excel in epigram, and their quick discernment of an incongruity and their sense of the ludicrous are dangerous gifts. The good Governor is aware of this, and he tries to put a rein on the tongue of witty Japanese youths or girls who notice the unfamiliar ways or dress of foreigners:

"No ironical remarks are to be made upon their dress, their religion or their doings. No coarse or insulting remark is to be addressed to them. They must not be looked in the face, or stared at impertinently. No one must enter the house of a stranger with muddy boots on. Foreign missionaries must be as much respected as Japanese priests. The games or promenades of foreigners are not to be interrupted by throwing pieces of crockery, sticks, or stones at them. You must avoid spitting, throwing down fruit-skins, or cigar-ends in the trains or ships on which foreigners are traveling with you."

Foreign ladies are to be treated with the most delicate circumspection, as is shown from the following directions:

"It is forbidden to point the finger at a foreign lady, or annoy them or any other foreigner by talking to them in a random manner, and asking them their age, without having some reason for the question. *** When you walk out with a stranger, keep in step with him, and if he takes out his watch you may be sure he has some other appointment to keep."

This official manual of politeness, we are told further, has more recently been extended to include behavior toward Chinamen. Their pigtails are not to be pulled, nor are they to be addressed as "rascal." More than this, the sale of any cartoon which may wound the sensibilities of Chinese soldiers, such as the numerous caricatures which appeared during the Chino-Japanese War, is utterly forbidden.

And Christian worshippers, in their own idolatry, insist upon calling the Japanese mere heathens.

The reports being sent into the Blade of the successful organization of a number of local Freethought Societies in different parts of the country, are both gratifying and encouraging. It has the appearance of a sort of revival in Freethought, and other localities ought to follow suit. The Blade will gladly contribute all it can to such a general movement.

Having elected to paddle our own canoe in the matter of publishing the Blade, rather than putting any dependency upon a plan of incorporation, we must look to our friends for that necessary help to swell the subscription list. Go out for one of our beautiful premiums. We then help you for the help you give us.

The Blade's Correspondence

Good Opinion of the Blade.

MONTANA.—Some time since I procured a postal order at Jefferson City for the sum of \$1.50, payable to the Blade. The order was lost, and an application has been made for the re-issue of the order, to be payable to the same address. I think you will receive the remittance soon, if you have not already. It was intended to extend my subscription one year from the time of its expiration. Will now, however, appropriate it to aid in relieving the financial difficulty in which the Blade seems to be involved. Further, if the Blade can be sustained in its present creditable condition, I will cheerfully volunteer to pay twice the subscription price, or \$3.00 per year. The paper, as it now is, breathes a personality which I fear would be in a measure lost if the proposed incorporation plan should be resorted to. Such a paper ought to be well supported without the expedient of the stock system of financing. I will suggest that as many Blade subscribers as conveniently can, should volunteer a double subscription, or donate a year's subscription to some worthy and progressive-minded individual who would appreciate it, or place four 3-months' subscriptions, or two 6-months' subscriptions, where they would most probably create the greatest interest in the paper and add permanently to its support. It is beyond question that there are many subscribers to the Blade who regard it as more than an equivalent for a yearly appropriation of three or five dollars. The columns of the Blade are filled with well chosen and ably written articles, and it shows improvement steadily. It stands out conspicuously as an exponent of the best anti-theological thought of this age, and has many of the characteristics of the Boston Investigator when that paper was at its best under the editorial management of that master, that genius and profound scholar, Horace Seaver. Those familiar with the pioneer stage of Freethought, as best outlined in the Investigator, cannot fail, however, to note a great change that has taken place since that time in advanced anti-religious thought. The agnosticism which was then almost universal among doubters, has now given place to a positive atheistic philosophy, which must, and certainly will before the close of the twentieth century, stand forth undisputed and unchallenged. Every effort should be made to bring about as speedily as possible this intellectual transformation and advancement from the grosser beliefs to the higher truth—from faith to demonstrated fact. The Freethought journal has a work to do; excluding

carefully from its columns all that is coarse or offensive, and fearlessly adhering to science and philosophy, it must carry forward this great work. I for one believe that nothing need be, or should be, admitted into a Freethought paper which could constitute grounds for complaint by the Postoffice department, or offend in the slightest degree the most refined, cultivated and fastidious taste. This is the way of prudence, of wisdom—the better way. Thus may the atheistic philosophy win for itself a universal recognition and a station exalted and commanding in the intellectual world.—S. P. CADY.

The Squirrel Problem.

WISCONSIN.—I see that man is still chasing the squirrel around the tree; he must be pretty tired by this time if he makes a very big circuit.

Mr. Snow says, "We are satisfied with our affirmative: the man goes around the squirrel, and rest our case."

Now, I propose to bring that man close up to the tree,—as close as the squirrel is. Now they go around five times,—how many times has he gone around the squirrel, or how many times has the squirrel gone around the man? We rest our case, and move that Mr. Hughes and Mr. Charlesworth act as judges; they to select the third if needed; and move that each one taking part in this puzzle or problem send in 25 cents, as the judges can't sit for nothing. I enclose my 25 cents, and inclose another problem, which I consider of more importance than the squirrel. Will some one please work it for me?

We had a kind of double funeral here the other day,—that of a good Christian woman and her babe; the child died about noon and the mother at midnight. The preacher took his text where Christ said, "Suffer the little ones to come unto me." He said the little one had gone straight up to heaven, and Jesus had called the mother to come to her darling babe, and her spirit had forthwith ascended, and they would meet in heaven. Now you will notice the child had 12 hours the start and the distance through this earth; they started in just the opposite direction. Now how far will they travel or how long will it be till they met in heaven? I asked the preacher to figure it out for me, but he seemed to be in a bad humor about something and said he didn't have time to talk to me. I can't work it out,—the more I try to get them together the farther I get them apart. Perhaps it might be worked with heaven's arithmetic, by the rule that three times one is one,

and once one is three.

I am very much pleased to see so many kind friends offering their services at Freethought funerals, especially Comrade A. J. Clausen, who started the list. I have been hoping to see some one in reach of me, but none yet closer than 100 miles; but what shall we sing?—love songs, war songs, or Christian songs, or shall we just play a march? I do hope there will be some one to get up a suitable song book for Materialists. I want at least half a dozen.—J. S. MCKINNEY.

The Paine Centennial.

PHILADELPHIA.—We are but a week off from another birthday of Thomas Paine, and next June it will be a century since he died.

Mr. J. P. Morgan has purchased General Washington's sword, which was used by him during the Revolutionary War to establish the Declaration of Independence, for which the pamphlets of Thomas Paine prepared the way. This sword will be hung by the side of the Key of the Bastile in the Home of Washington, which key was presented by Thomas Paine to the greatest General of the new world and which Washington pointed to with pride to the visitors at his home on Market Street, in Philadelphia.

It is the intention of the Paine Associations to celebrate the centenary of Paine's death with appropriate services next June at New Rochelle, and Blade readers who are unable to be present on that occasion, can send to Dr. Foote, New York, their names with a 100-cent greenback, representing a penny a year for the benefits they have received from Paine's writings. I hope there will be a liberal response from those residing in the Louisiana Territory, the purchase of which Paine advocated in 1803, and which the Liberals have enjoyed, and the Exposition at St. Louis ignored his important services. Fraternally yours.—JAMES B. ELLIOTT.

Freethought in the Colleges.

INDIANA.—I have some good news for the Blade. As a result of Mr. (Rev.) Neill's visit to this town, an atheist society has been organized at this school. It is a free platform society and you are allowed to talk on anything from religion to deep sea diving. We have made arrangements with some of the professors to lecture to us every Sunday at 6:30 p. m. Last Sunday we discussed "Socialism," and "Shall Christianity Rule the World?" The members and those in attendance numbered 56. We started out with about 8. The meeting lasted a little over two hours. We had a lady speaker with us this time. We intend to study Darwin, Spencer, Haeckel, etc.

Most of the members are Socialists, Infidels, or both. We are anticipating an attendance of over 100 next Sunday.—JOE B. THORN.

Bought Some Seeds.

ILLINOIS.—I have, from finding H. W.

Buckbee's ad. in your worthy paper, bought twice from him of his "Full of Life" bulbs and plants, and found them to be equal to the words of an old friend in praise of this man. My Freethought friend, Dr. Brown, wrote me: "Mr. Buckbee is one of our most responsible men of Rockford, Ill." I pass these words on to others who may wish to add to home or farm needs and beauty, in his line of produce. I have studied his large Seed and Plant Guide for 1909, until I am almost heartbroken over having but 25 feet of ground, but shall add a few more good things to the tiny garden, such as asparagus roots, tree-tomatoes, etc.—ALLIE LINDSAY LYNCH.

Blade and Emergency Fund.

CALIF.—I hand you herewith two dollars. Set my subscription ahead for one dollar, and apply the other to the fund for sending the Blade to the old subscribers who are not able to pay for it.—G. R. STONE.

Freethought in Indiana.

OHIO.—A letter just received from Dr. T. J. Bowles, of Muncie, Ind., in which he reports upon his efforts to organize a Sunday-afternoon Lecture Course, has given me so much pleasure and aroused such a degree of enthusiasm that I hasten to tell the good news to your readers, hoping the Freethinkers in many other places will be encouraged to go and do likewise.

The doctor's plan is to give a lecture each Sunday at 2:30 p. m., in one of their city theaters. The lectures are to be free to the public. A fund for the payment of rent and other expenses is provided by donations from generous friends of the movement, and a collection taken up before each lecture.

He, (our energetic M. D.) has been at work on his program for some time, and has already engaged a lecturer for each Sunday in January and February. These speakers give their services without compensation, the management re-imbursement them for their traveling and other necessary expenses.

The selection of the hour is a most happy hit. It is just at the time when most people—after having a good dinner—are beginning to cast about for some means of entertainment for the afternoon. I like this, because I have so long argued that "we must appeal to the needs of the people," and in our place, at least, I find many rather at a loss for means of recreation and entertainment on Sunday afternoons.

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